

who were honored to know him. While we will miss him in this life, we know that his residence today is far better than ours is here. And we will be satisfied in that knowledge until we meet again.

HONORING BISHOP ROBERT J. CARLSON

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 6, 2009*

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bishop Robert J. Carlson, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Saginaw, as he celebrates the 25th anniversary of his Episcopal Ordination. The Diocese is celebrating this event in honor of Bishop Carlson at St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in Bay City, Michigan, on January 11.

Bishop Carlson is a native of Minneapolis. He was ordained to the priesthood on May 23, 1970, for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy and his Master of Divinity degree from Saint Paul Seminary. He continued his studies at Catholic University of America, receiving his Licentiate in Canon Law in 1979.

On January 11, 1984, Bishop Carlson was ordained as an auxiliary bishop for his home archdiocese. In 1994 he was appointed the Bishop of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He served at this post until Pope John Paul II directed he become the Bishop of the Diocese of Saginaw. He was installed as the fifth Bishop of the Saginaw Diocese on February 24, 2005.

Currently Bishop Carlson serves as co-chair of the Mission Advisory Committee of the Institute for Priestly Formation, as a member of the Canon Law Society of America, a member of the Board of the International Dominican Foundation, as a member of Board of Sacred Heart Seminary, a member of the Board of Los Cabos Children's Foundation, a member of the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors. In 2004 he founded the Messengers of Peace Religious Community in Colombia.

Bishop Carlson's pastoral letters, speeches and publications reflect his commitment to the Catholic Church, priestly formation, the sanctity of human life, and evangelizing. He has written on the Sacraments and the role of Bishops in the Church.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me and applaud the work of Bishop Robert J. Carlson. His motto is, "Before the Cross there is no Defense," and expresses his deep faith in Our Lord, Jesus Christ. The cross on his coat of arms represents his commitment and mission to the faithful entrusted to his custody. Bishop Carlson has devoted his life to the care and nurturing of people of the Catholic Church and all humanity. The best testament to his life's achievement is the love, respect and spiritual growth they reflect back to him.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIS "SNAKE" MURRAY

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 6, 2009*

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the life and legacy of the late Willis "Snake" Murray, an outstanding Floridian who is one of the most unsung leaders of our Miami-Dade County community and Florida.

A native of Miami, Mr. Murray was born to Willis and Mazie Murray on October 9, 1923, in Sanford, Florida. One of the distinguished members of Booker T. Washington's Class of 1943, he went on to obtain his bachelor's and master's degree from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University, and attended postgraduate studies at Barry University and University of Miami.

An avid football fan, Mr. Murray especially enjoyed attending Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University and Miami Dolphins football games throughout football season.

Mr. Murray was a volunteer for the Alliance for Aging advocating for seniors, the American Cancer Society and the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Youth and Elderly Against Crimes Task Force. He was also a strong advocate for seniors. Each year he participated in the American Cancer Society Relay For Life, which raises money for cancer research and programs.

Mr. Murray was a staunch believer who abided by the dictum that those who have less in life, through no fault of their own, should be helped by the government, regardless of their race, creed, age, or gender. As a community activist, Mr. Murray had a penchant for being at the forefront of African-American and other minority struggles in their quest for justice and equality. The unabashed and exemplary service demonstrated by Mr. Murray was evident in his desire for youth academic excellence and political empowerment for disenfranchised Americans. His commendable political activism has motivated countless others from all political and philosophical persuasions throughout Florida to follow his example of unrelenting defense of the "forgotten man." Moreover, his charitable actions toward others served as the quintessential embodiment of the Judeo-Christian faith.

Throughout Mr. Murray's commitment as a community activist, he remained devoted to his family. He will be missed by all who knew him. I offer my heartfelt condolences to his family—his brother, James Murray; daughters, Barbara Walker and Karlar Arthur; and four grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing Mr. Murray's contributions to South Florida. Mr. Willis "Snake" Murray's life was a triumph. He was blessed with a loving family who took pleasure in every aspect of his life and his interests. He will be remembered as a true pioneer and community activist.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDIKIDS HEALTH INSURANCE ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 6, 2009*

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce the MediKids Health Insurance Act of 2009, legislation to provide universal health coverage to our Nation's children.

During the campaign, President-elect Obama spoke of the need to mandate coverage to ensure that every child receives needed health care services. MediKids is the simplest, most effective means of achieving that goal. While it is critical that any reform proposal meet the special needs of children, I want to be clear that I am not suggesting we start with children or stop with children. I am looking forward to working with the new Administration and Congressional colleagues on a health reform effort for which the goal is assuring comprehensive care for everyone. I am open to other proposals and believe that we have to look across the board at various options. However, I submit that MediKids contains many elements that could be useful in the upcoming debate.

Nearly 9 million children in this country still lack health insurance coverage. The majority of these children live in families with at least one full-time worker. Often, their families are not offered coverage by their employers at all or they cannot afford the premiums. These simple, but sobering, statistics speak to the need for change. Our system is fundamentally broken when a working parent cannot get health coverage for his or her children.

Rather than reinvent the wheel, I think we should build on what works. When Congress created Medicare more than 40 years ago, our Nation's seniors were more likely to be living in poverty than any other age group. Many senior citizens were unable to afford needed medical services and unable to find health insurance in the private market, even if they had the resources. Today, as a result of Medicare's success, seniors are much less likely to be shackled by the bonds of poverty or to go without needed health care.

Sadly, children are now the group who are most likely to be living in poverty. Kids in America are nearly twice as vulnerable to poverty as adults. This travesty is morally reprehensible, and it has grave consequences for the future of our country. Our future rests on our ability to provide our children with the basic conditions to thrive and become healthy, educated, and successful adults. Poor children are often malnourished and have difficulty succeeding in school. Untreated illnesses only worsen their chance to become productive members of our economy. Healthy children are the key to our economic future.

The MediKids Health Insurance Act would create a new Federal health insurance program for children. Modeled after Medicare, MediKids would provide comprehensive benefits appropriate to children, simplified cost-sharing, prescription drug coverage and mental health parity.

Every child in America would be automatically enrolled in MediKids at birth and maintain that eligibility through age 23. The cost, adjusted for income, would be applied to the family's annual tax bill, unless they opted for